

Speaking Out on Pending Cases

Tips for commenting on state and federal utility regulatory proceedings



- Consumers are invited to comment on all cases in which the OUCC participates. These include all IURC proceedings.
- Field hearings are held in certain cases.
- Whether a field hearing is held or not, written consumer comments are welcome and will be reviewed.
- The OUCC must comply with specific deadlines in each case and needs to receive comments in advance.



learn more!



Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor

100 N. Senate Av., Room N501 • Indianapolis, IN 46204-2215

www.IN.gov/OUCC • toll-free: 1-888-441-2494 • voice/TDD: 317-232-2494 • fax: 317-232-5923

The Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor (OUCC) is the state agency that represents residential, small business and industrial consumer interests in:

- All cases before the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission (IURC), and
- Cases before the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and Federal Communications Commission (FCC) that may affect Indiana consumers.

Written consumer comments

Consumers can submit written comments **in any case** in which the OUCC is a formal party. The OUCC asks that all case-related consumer comments be submitted in writing.

Written comments can be made by mail, fax and e-mail, and through the electronic contact form on the OUCC Website.



Be sure to include your:

- Name.
- Address.
- Daytime telephone number.
- E-mail address (if applicable).

Also, clearly specify:

- The utility and cause number (in cases before the IURC, this is a five-digit number).
- Whether you are a customer of the utility.
- Whether your comments are on your behalf, or on behalf of an organization, your business or your family.

Written consumer comments:

- Are reviewed by the OUCC consumer services staff.
- Are reviewed by the OUCC case team that is working on the particular case.
 - This team typically includes attorneys, engineers, economists and accountants who are using their expertise to review the case issues and develop a position on behalf of consumer interests.

- May also be submitted to the IURC (or when applicable, FERC or FCC) to be included in the official case record.

In general, it is best for comments to be kept as brief and to the point as possible. While your comments do not need to be technical in nature, they can and should reflect your personal and/or professional experience.

Also, case-related consumer comments should be submitted in a timely manner. The OUCC must comply with **specific testimonial deadlines** in every case and needs to receive consumer comments before those deadlines.

Public Field Hearings

State law requires a public field hearing to be held in any IURC rate case in which a utility seeks to increase its annual revenue by at least \$2.5 million. The hearing is required to be held in the largest municipality within that utility's service territory.

Public field hearings in other cases and at other locations may be held if there is a formal request. While the OUCC can assist consumers in filing formal requests, the IURC makes the final determination on whether to have a field hearing in these other cases.

All comments submitted to the IURC at public field hearings, whether presented orally or in writing, receive equal consideration and become evidence in the case.

If you wish to speak at a public field hearing, be aware that:

- The process is very similar to what happens in a courtroom. If you speak, you will be sworn in and your comments will be transcribed by a court reporter.
- You will be asked to fill out a brief form before testifying, to provide your basic contact information and to identify whether you are a customer of the utility.
- Brief, focused remarks will help get your point across most effectively.



- If other consumers have spoken before you during a hearing and your views echo their remarks, you may simply say that you agree with comments made earlier.
- If you provide oral testimony, the utility's attorneys have the right to question you when you are finished.
- You may bring an exhibit, such as a letter or copies of bills, to emphasize your point and to give to the Commission. These exhibits will become evidence in the case, along with your remarks.
- If you are considering reading a letter from the podium, please be aware that simply submitting the letter as written testimony will ensure that your comments are placed in the record, where Commissioners are required by law to review them.
- A final decision in the case will not be made at the field hearing. A final order may be issued several weeks or months later.



Indiana Office of Utility Consumer Counselor

100 N. Senate Avenue
Room N501

Indianapolis, IN 46204-2215

toll-free: 1-888-441-2494

voice/TDD: 317-232-2494

fax: 317-232-5923

www.IN.gov/OUCC